

FINAL CLEARANCE FIGURE: 9.5 MILLION HOMES...

Leonard-Lalonde Bout's Pay-Per-View Gross Tops Total For Wrestlemania IV

By CANDICE CARMEL

"The most successful pay-per-view boxing event ever," was how an exultant Jim Troy described the championship bout between Sugar Ray Leonard and Donny (Golden Boy) Lalonde, held Nov. 7 at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas.

"The final pay-per-view clearance figure was in excess of 9.5 million homes, slightly less than the 10 million households (in the U.S.) it was available in," said Troy, senior vice president of pay-per-view operations for TitanSports, Inc.

The retail price for the cable hook-up was \$29.95.

Titan Entertainment, a division of TitanSports Inc. and the parent company of the World Wrestling Federation, was the exclusive distributor of pay-per-view television, closed-circuit exhibitions, and international sales for the fight. It was the first time the company had done a boxing pay-per-view

event (AB, Nov. 19).

A few cable systems dropped out before the fight because of technical coordination problems, he said, explaining why the figure was just under 10 million.

"The only cable system we regretted losing was Group W in Chicago, which had 100,000 sub-systems. The others were just marginal systems."

The strongest response areas were "the West Coast, which did extremely well, and the Northeast, which went through the roof," said Troy.

Systems with the highest buy rates were:

- Select TV/Los Angeles: 10 percent buy rate out of 60,000 systems.

- Multi-Media/Wichita, Kan.: 7.6 percent buy rate.

- Cable Vision/Boston: 6.71 percent buy rate out of 70,000.

- Cable Vision/Woodbury, N.Y.: 8.92 percent buy rate out of 80,000.

- Cable Vision/Yonkers, N.Y.: 15 percent buy rate.

- United Cable/Baltimore: Seven percent buy rate out of 25 systems.

- Rogers Cable/Minneapolis: Eight percent buy rate out of 60,000 systems.

- Rogers Cable/Laredo, Texas: 5.2 percent buy rate

- Gateway Cable/Newark, N.J.: 9.6 percent buy rate.

- Brooklyn/Queens Cable (N.Y.): Seven percent buy rate.

The event rivaled Wrestlemania IV, where a nine percent buy rate was generated out of 10.2 million homes.

"It (the bout) did not achieve as large a clearance or buy rate as Wrestlemania IV, but it generated more gross revenue and was a record-setting event in its own right," Troy told AB.

"We conducted a survey in 100 cable systems, and 98 percent of those polled gave the pay-per-view an excellent value rating. We found Sugar Ray Leonard to be a real salable commodity, and I predict he'll be back in the ring with Mar-

vin Hagler or Tommy Hearns for what will be the largest pay-per-view buy."

Closed-circuit sales generated just less than \$1 million, he said. "There were several markets that did very well, Florida in particular. The Cap Centre (Landover, Md.) also did well, drawing more than 7,000."

Continued on Page 40



FATHER & SON — Ray Ward, vice president, Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum, and his son, Steve, enjoyed watching the funds roll in even if the runs began to diminish for the Oakland A's, baseball's American League champs, during the World Series. (AB Photo)

Gebel-Williams Leaving Ringling As Performer

Gunther Gebel-Williams, one of the world's most famous wild animal trainers, will leave the performance ring of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus at the end of its 1990 season and will join the show's management team.

The announcement was made Nov. 17 in Pittsburgh, Pa., by Gebel-Williams and Kenneth Feld, circus president and producer.

A "two-year spectacular farewell tour" is planned, after which Gebel-Williams will make only occasional guest appearances in the show ring.

19,200 SEATS

Campbell Chosen For Columbus Job

The Columbus (Ga.) Iron Works Convention & Trade Center Authority has hired 20-year arena veteran Larry Campbell of Port Arthur, Texas, as its executive director, effective Oct. 24.

Campbell, who was the manager of the Port Arthur Civic Center, was picked from among 28 applicants for the post, said Bob Hydrick, authority chairman.

Hydrick said Campbell has experience in buildings in which convention revenues were not "automatic" and understands the need for strong sales and promotional efforts to attract business meetings and public and special events.

"Secondly, he has opened three buildings," Hydrick said. "He has hands-on experience in all phases of the operation of a building like ours. We believe his 'from-the-ground-up' experience will be helpful to us in improving day-to-day operations here."


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